UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1996/116
8 March 1996

ENGLISH ONLY

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-second session
Item 9 (c) of the provisional agenda

FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

COORDINATING ROLE OF THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS BODIES DEALING WITH THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 50/187 of 22 December 1995 on the strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights, the General Assembly:

"...

"Taking into account that in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, concerned by the growing disparity between the activities of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat, and the human, financial and other resources available to carry them out ...;

"Noting that in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights stressed the importance of strengthening the Centre for Human Rights;

"Taking into account the establishment of the post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as the mandate for the post, including its coordinating role and its overall supervision of the Centre, as well as the request by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/141 for appropriate staff and resources to enable the High Commissicner to fulfil his mandate;

"Noting with concern that the response to these requests has not been commensurate with the needs, resulting in a serious imbalance between the mandates assigned to the High Commissioner and the Centre by the competent bodies of the United Nations system in the field of human rights and the resources available to fulfil all these mandates;

"...

"2. Reiterates the need to ensure that all the necessary human, financial, material and personnel resources are provided without delay to the High Commissioner and the Centre to enable them to carry out efficiently, effectively and expeditiously the mandates assigned to them;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to make available additional human and financial resources, within the overall regular budget of the United Nations, to enhance the capability of the High Commissioner and of the Centre to fulfil effectively their respective mandates ...;

"4. Supports fully the High Commissioner in his efforts to strengthen the human rights activities of the United Nations, inter alia, through measures aimed at restructuring the Centre to improve its efficiency and effectiveness;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit an interim report to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-second session and a final report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session ... on the measures taken to implement the present resolution."

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

3. In connection with the establishment of the post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (General Assembly resolution 48/141), the Secretary-General submitted a statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/48/61), indicating that, while the High Commissioner would draw on the resources of the Centre to fulfil his tasks, a number of additional posts (one Under-Secretary-General, two P-5 and three General Service posts) and operational funds would be required, totalling $1,471,400. The General Assembly did not approve these posts at its forty-eighth session. Instead, it authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of up to US$ 1,471,400 and in connection with the establishment of the office of the High Commissioner decided to consider such additional appropriation as might be necessary and not to exceed $1,471,400 at its resumed forty-eighth session. At that session, the Assembly decided to defer consideration of this question to its forty-ninth session. The Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/49/53) to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, on the basis of experience, proposed that instead of the six above-mentioned posts

(one Under-Secretary-General, two P-5 and three General Service posts) nine posts be provided for the High Commissioner and his office (one Under-Secretary-General, two P-5, one P-4 and three General Service posts for Geneva and one D-1 and one General Service posts for the New York Office). The Secretary-General indicated in that report that it was estimated that the revised requirements of the High Commissioner, as defined above, could be met from within the balance of the amount for which the Secretary-General was authorized to enter into commitment, i.e. $1,471,400.

4. Regarding the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, endorsed by resolution 48/121 of the General Assembly, it will be recalled that in the related statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/48/46), the Secretary-General indicated that one P-5, one P-4 and two General Service posts would be required, as well as operational funds totalling $1,167,500. The General Assembly did not approve these posts at its forty-eighth session. Instead, it authorized the Secretary-General to enter into all the commitments necessary within the above amount in respect of the full implementation of the activities envisaged in the resolution and to consider such additional appropriation as might be necessary and not to exceed $1,167,500 at its resumed forty-eighth session. At that session, the Assembly decided to defer consideration of the question to its forty-ninth session. The Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/49/53) to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly requested the appropriation of the amount of $1,167,500.

5. Concerning the continuing United Nations human rights presence in Cambodia, the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session did not appropriate the additional resources of $1,834,100 requested by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/48/78). Instead, the Assembly took note of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in its report (A/48/7/Add.12) and authorized the Secretary-General to enter into additional commitments up to $1,834,100 under section 21 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 for the financing of human rights activities in Cambodia. The Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/49/53) to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly requested the appropriation of $1,834,100 for that purpose.

6. In summary, in his report to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly (A/C.5/49/53) the Secretary-General requested an appropriation of $4,473,000 under section 21 of the programme budget for 1994-1995, representing the level of resources for which commitment authority had initially been extended in respect of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the implementation of the Vienna Plan of Action and the Human Rights presence in Cambodia.

7. The General Assembly, at its forty-ninth session, decided to appropriate, on an exceptional basis, $4,473,000 under section 21, Human rights, on the understanding that the posts requested by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/49/53) for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Centre for Human Rights and the Human Rights Office in Cambodia were approved on a temporary basis and that all posts shall be subject to a detailed review by the Advisory Committee and the General Assembly at the earliest opportunity at the resumed forty-ninth session.

8. The Secretary-General, in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/50/6 (Sect. 21)) requested (a) the establishment of a new P-5 post to strengthen the administrative function of the Centre; (b) the establishment of a new P-3 post to assist the High Commissioner; (c) the conversion of the 21 temporary regular budget posts approved for 1994-1995 to the category of established regular budget posts (including the Under-Secretary-General post of the High Commissioner, 4 Professional and 4 General Service posts for the High Commissioner's Office, 2 Professional and 2 General Service posts for the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and 8 Professional posts for the Cambodia field office); and (d) the redeployment and downgrading of a D-2 post from Executive Direction and Management to the D-1 level to head the International Instruments Branch of the Centre for Human Rights.

9. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, which considered the proposed programme budget of the Secretary-General for the biennium 1996-1997 in August 1995, concluded that with the exception of the Under-Secretary-General post of the High Commissioner, one P-5 and two General Service posts in the Office of the High Commissioner, the decision to convert the remaining 17 temporary posts, approved in 1994-1995, into established posts in 1996-1997 should be deferred until the restructuring of the programme of work of the Centre and identification of priorities was completed. With regard to the proposal for two new established posts in 1996-1997, the Committee did not agree with the establishment of the new P-3 post in the Office of the High Commissioner, but recommended the establishment of the new P-5 post to discharge all the functions of an administrative executive officer of the Centre.

10. The General Assembly, at its fiftieth session, taking into account the ongoing process of restructuring of the Centre for Human Rights, decided that the Secretary-General shall report by 31 March 1996 to the General Assembly at its resumed fiftieth session, making proposals on the appropriate level and distribution of resources for the Centre for Human Rights, and endorsed, pending consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee as contained in its first report on the proposed programme budget, as outlined in the preceding paragraph.

11. The Centre for Human Rights is currently preparing the report requested for submission to the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

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